ATTACHMENT 5:

Supporting Statement for Department of the Interior's Programmatic Clearance for Customer Satisfaction Surveys

(OMB Control Number 1040-0001)

Approved January 2002 through January 31, 2005

Introduction:

The Department of the Interior (DOI) requests a 3-year programmatic clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to conduct customer research through external surveys by means of in-person intercept surveys, telephone interviews or questionnaires, mail and e-mail surveys, web-based surveys, focus groups, and comment cards.

The proposed information collection request (ICR) covers most of the organizational agencies in DOI. However, the National Park Service (NPS), which has one of the most mature customer survey programs in the Federal Government, will continue under its own separate clearance given the complexity and specificity of its program. The participating bureaus and offices covered under the proposed ICR include:

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Bureau of Reclamation
US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)
Office of Insular Affairs
Minerals Management Service
Office of the Secretary
Office of Surface Mining
US Geological Survey (USGS)

A. Justification

1. What circumstances make this collection necessary?

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (Pub.L. No. 103-62) sets out to "improve Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by promoting a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction" (Section 2.b.3). In order to fulfill this responsibility, DOI's bureaus and offices must collect data from their respective user groups to (1) better understand the needs and desires of the public and (2) respond to those needs and desires accordingly.

This course of action is fortified by Executive Order (E.O.) 12862 (September 11, 1993) aimed at "ensuring the Federal Government provides the highest quality service possible to the American people." The E.O. discusses surveys as a means for determining the kinds and qualities of service desired by the Federal Government's customers and for determining satisfaction levels for existing service. These voluntary customer surveys will be used to ascertain customer satisfaction with DOI's bureaus and offices in terms of services and products. Previous customer surveys have provided useful information to DOI's bureaus and offices for assessing how well we deliver our services and products, making improvements, and reporting on annual performance goals as set out in GPRA-related documents. The results are used internally, and summaries are provided to the OMB on an annual basis and are used to satisfy the requirements and spirit of E.O. 12862.

Furthermore, E.O. 12862 requires agencies to provide a "means to address customer complaints." To that end, bureaus and offices may use customer comment cards as an opportunity for customers to provide feedback to the agencies on the service they have received.

More recently, President Bush's Management Agenda for 2001 calls for citizen-centered government. The Secretary of the Interior's August 3, 2001 memorandum, "Management Excellence and Citizen-Centered Service," directs bureaus and offices to focus on citizen-centered governance. The proposed OMB Guideline for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Dissemination by Federal Agencies would require agencies to submit annual reports "detailing the number and nature of complaints received by the agency regarding agency compliance with these OMB guidelines." Comment cards and other survey methods facilitated by this programmatic clearance would provide valuable information to assist DOI's bureaus and offices in following the Administration's guidance.

In addition to GPRA and E.O. 12862, the statutes, regulations, and Secretarial Orders that created each of the bureaus and offices further enhance the need to engage the public and deliver quality products and services to our customers.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information to be used?

Chiefly, these data are being collected to improve the service and products that the participating bureaus and offices provide to the public. They also use this information to support all aspects of planning, from buildings, roads, and interpretive exhibits, to technical systems. In conducting their management, planning, and monitoring activities, managers also use the information to allocate effectively their limited personnel and financial resources to the highest priority elements.

DOI anticipates that the information obtained could lead to reallocation of resources, revisions in certain agency processes and policies, and development of guidance related to the agency's customer services. Ultimately, these changes should result in improvement in services DOI provides to the public and, in turn, the public perception of DOI.

Types of Questions Asked
There are 11 topic areas that the participating bureaus and offices are proposing to voluntarily obtain information from their customers and stakeholders. No one survey will cover all the topic areas; rather, this serves as a "guideline menu" from which the agencies would develop their questions. Examples of the types of questions that would be asked under each topic are provided. Under the proposed ICR, the agencies could use these specific questions or develop questions that fit within the generally understood confines of the topic area. Questions may be asked in languages other than English, e.g., Spanish, where appropriate.

The surveys could be designed using one of two generally accepted modes: (a) a statement for which the respondent uses a scaled answer (e.g., strongly agree, strongly disagree, not applicable, etc., based on a Lichert Scale) or (b) a question that asks for a specific response (e.g., yes/no, demographics, open-ended improvement question, etc.). For questions that use the Lichert scale and a preset list of options, the data will be reported in a numeric fashion, including average response and percent favorable. Open-ended questions will be subjected to a content analysis and be reported on accordingly.

Communication/information/education:

(a) Providing consistent and timely information to the public.
(b) Where did you obtain your information about this site?
(c) Making it easy for people to find out about proposed changes.
(d) Educating people about particular processes.
(e) Providing accurate, detailed, and affordable maps and brochures.
(f) Providing useful web site, signs, publications, and exhibits.
(g) Charging an appropriate fee for the information/material provided.
(h) The information provided was effective and helpful.
(i) Providing quality web-based information.
(j) Engaging the public in the planning process.

2. Disability accessibility:

(a) Do you or does someone in your party have a disability?
(b) If yes, how well does the agency make buildings, facilities, and trails accessible to people with disabilities?
(c) Accessibility to the programs and activities that address my needs.

3. Facilities:

(a) Maintaining roads and trails.
(b) Maintaining a clean recreation site.
(c) Providing entrance/directional signs to sites and facilities.
(d) Providing a facility that is conducive to meeting specific user needs.

4. Management practices:

(a) Responding to issues and problems in a timely manner.
(b) Providing access to a supervisor to resolve the problem.
(c) Understanding my needs.
(d) If you could make one improvement to *XXX* service, what would it be?

5. Resource management:

(a) Providing reasonable access to resources.
(b) The extent to which the natural and cultural resources are protected.
(c) Getting public input when identifying critical areas for conservation.
(d) Preserving water resources and habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants.

6. Rules, regulations, policies:

(a) Ensuring public awareness of rules and regulations.
(b) Ensuring fair and consistent policies for all users.
(c) The rules, regulations, and policies are clear and in plain language.
(d) Providing adequate protest and appeal policies to resolve issues and disputes.
(e) Adequately enforcing rules and regulations for all users.

7. Service delivery:

(a) Providing a single point of contact.
(b) The staff I interacted with were courteous and friendly.
(c) The staff I interacted with were knowledgeable about the rules and regulations.
(d) The staff I interacted with are able to answer my questions about natural, historic, and cultural resources.
(e) The staff listened to and considered my ideas.
(f) The training I received provided the information I needed.
(g) The response was timely.

8. Technical assistance:

(a) Provides unbiased scientific and technical support products and services.
(b) Reflects reasonable pricing.
(c) Quality of the execution of the analysis and interpretation.
(d) Considered alternative interpretations.
(e) Provides useful information.

9. Program-specific: These questions will reflect the specific details of a program that pertain to their customer respondents. The questions will be developed to address very specific and/or technical issues related to the program. The questions will be geared toward gaining a better understanding about how to provide specific products and services as well as the priority the public would give to specific program objectives; they will *not* ask the respondents for their opinions about policies.

10. Overall satisfaction:
(a) Everything considered, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the delivery of *XXX* program or service?
(b) Values my relationship as a customer.
(c) I will contact or visit again for information or services.
(d) I trust *XXX* agency to do a good job performing *XXX* mission.

11. General demographics:

(a) What is your zip code?
(b) How many times have you used this service in the previous 12 months?
(c) How many people are in your group?
(d) What activities did you participate in?
(e) As part of your recreation in this site/area, approximately how much money did you spend in the local community/area (e.g., lodging, equipment, food, fuel, maps/books, tours, guides)?
(f) What was your total household income (before taxes) in 2000 (e.g., less than $20,000; $20,000 to $39,999; $40,000 to $59,999; $60,000 to $79,999; $80,000 to $99,999; $100,000 to $119,999; $120,000 or more)?
(g) What is the highest level of education you have completed (some high school or less; high school graduate or GED; business school, trade school, or some college; college graduate; some graduate school; masters, Ph.D., or professional degree)?
(h) What is the primary language spoken at home? (e.g., English, Spanish)
(i) In what ethnic group would you place you place yourself (Hispanic/Latino or non-Hispanic/Latino)?
(j) In what race would you place yourself (American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black or African America; White; Native Hawaiian)? Select one or more.

How are data used?

Managers and program specialists use these data to identify:

- Service needs of customers
- Strengths and weaknesses of services
- Ideas or suggestions for improvement of services from our customers
- Barriers to achieving customer service standards
- Changes to customer service standards
- Baselines to measure change in improving service delivery over time
- Improving public trust in government

Strategic Plan/Annual Performance Plan Measures

In fulfilling the requirements of GPRA, DOI and all of its bureaus and offices have created a Strategic Plan in coordination with their respective stakeholders. GPRA requires the DOI to report annually on their progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the Annual Performance Plan. Some of the data collected may be used as the basis or in support of specific performance measures.

For example, FWS has just developed an annual performance goal requiring that bureau to complete and analyze a new national visitor satisfaction survey process comparable to that used by other Federal land management agencies. This goal depends on having a programmatic clearance in place to facilitate the survey process. BLM has numerous customer service goals, including specific satisfaction targets for its processes and services provided to recreators on public lands as well as authorized users.

3. Does the collection involve the use of information technology? Does it reduce the burden and to what extent?

Improved information technology will be used, when possible, to reduce the burden on the public. One of the goals of this effort is to obtain the information required with a minimum amount of burden to the public. The information will be gathered through personal telephone interviews, intercept interviews or questionnaires, focus groups, web-based forums, mail and email questionnaires, and comment cards.

For products or services that are provided through electronic means, whether E-commerce or web-based information, a web survey may be used. In other cases, telephone surveys may be employed to ease the burden on the public. BLM's experience shows that telephone surveys can produce some of the highest response rates while impacting the respondent to the smallest degree.

4. Is the information duplicated by any other Federal agency, and can similar available information be used or modified for this collection?

This effort does not duplicate any other survey being done by DOI or other Federal agencies. Other Federal agencies are conducting user surveys but are not soliciting comments on the delivery of DOI products and services. As part of this effort, DOI consulted with other agencies, including the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, who conduct surveys of similar customers.

DOI is keeping abreast of what other Federal agencies are doing regarding customer surveys. The participating bureaus and offices work in partnerships with the Interagency Customer Forum. The Forum identifies and develops crosscutting performance goals, shares customer service methodologies and related information, and ensures comparability of data to eliminate redundancy.

Furthermore, DOI's Customer Forum, which includes representatives of the bureaus in DOI, regularly meets to discuss the crosscutting issues and data needs in the customer service arena.

5. What is the Agency doing to minimize the burden on small businesses or other small entities?

One of the main purposes of this effort is to gather information needed without putting a significant additional burden on small entities. Small samples will be used to select respondents, and the number of questions on the surveys will be kept to a minimum. Small entities, as well as DOI, will benefit from the government's increased responsiveness to their needs. Use of electronic means also have the potential to reduce the burden on small entities.

6. Are there any technical or legal obstacles to reducing the burden, and what are the consequences to the Federal program if the information is not collected or is collected less frequently?

Without this information collection, DOI would not be able to determine the kind and quality of service customers want, their level of satisfaction, or ways to improve customer service. In addition, DOI would not be able to meet the requirements of GPRA, Executive Order 12862, or the President's Management Agenda (August 2001).

7. Are there any special circumstances for exceptions to 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2) requiring respondents to: (i) report more often than quarterly, (ii) prepare written responses in fewer than 30 days after receipt, (iii) to submit more than an original and two copies of any document, (iv) retain records for more than 3 years?

The collection of information is consistent with these provisions, except for (ii). We are asking respondents to send back their responses in fewer than 30 days after receipt of the survey. On these types of surveys, respondents normally will respond rather quickly if they intend to respond at all. The first survey (for each bureau's customer line) will provide our baseline data, and we will consider all responses until the time we make the final baseline report. These are voluntary surveys and respondents, of course, are not obligated to respond. Also, there are no special circumstances with respect to 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2)(v) through (viii).

8. What efforts were made to consult with the public and a representative sample of respondents?

As required in 5 CFR 1320.11, DOI provided the 60-day review and comment process with a notice published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2001 (66 FR 41600), soliciting comments on DOI's planned and existing customer research. No public comments were received.

DOI also consulted with and/or received relevant material from several agencies, including the NPS and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

9. Will payment or gifts be provided to respondents?

A great deal of the literature related to customer satisfaction research recommends that incentives, monetary and non-monetary, be used to increase response rates (see D. Dillman publications, specifically *Mail and Internet Surveys,* 2000). Although bureaus and offices acting in wholly a regulatory role would not seek to provide remuneration to their permittees, bureaus and offices that operate in a more service-related mode may find incentives to be both helpful and appropriate. Therefore, DOI proposes to handle remuneration/incentives on a case-by-case basis as part of the expedited OMB review (i.e., the 10-day expedited OMB review). An agency may propose non-monetary incentives; such as a discount at an on-site book store, a small souvenir, or complimentary access to a facility/site.

10. What assurance of confidentiality is provided to respondents?

We protect information submitted by respondents that is considered confidential or proprietary under the Freedom of Information Act and in accordance with each bureau's regulations on protecting these data. Respondents are informed of this assurance on the survey forms or during the course of the survey interview.

11. Does the information collected include any questions of a sensitive nature?

The questions used on these surveys will not be of a sensitive nature.

12. What is the estimated reporting and recordkeeping "hour" burden?

We estimate that there are approximately 60,000 respondents submitting surveys annually and that it takes approximately 15 minutes to complete each survey. We also estimate that there are approximately 60,000 respondents submitting comment cards annually and that it takes 3 minutes to complete each comment card. Given these estimates, DOI anticipates a budget of 18,000 hours per year for these proposed collections. We estimate, based on a $15 per hour valuation of volunteer time and the projected budget hours, an approximate aggregate cost to respondents of $270,000. Burden includes the total time, effort, or financial resources expended to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide the information, including: (1) reviewing instructions; (2) developing, acquiring, installing, and utilizing technology and systems for purposes of collecting, validating, verifying, processing, maintaining, disclosing, and providing information; (3) adjusting the existing ways to comply with any previously applicable instructions and requirements; (4) training personnel to respond to a collection of information; (5) searching data sources; (6) completing and reviewing the collection of information; and (7) transmitting or otherwise disclosing information.

13. What is the estimated reporting and recordkeeping "non-hour cost" burden?

We have identified no reporting and recordkeeping "non-hour cost" burdens associated with this proposed collection of information.

14. What is the estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government?

The bureaus and offices will, on a case-by-case situation, determine if it is more efficient and cost effective to develop and analyze these surveys in-house or to turn to private or other non-government entities to provide that service. Current budgets anticipate an aggregated expense for all participating bureaus/offices in the Department of $1.2 million per annum.

15. Are there any program changes or adjustments requested in Sections 13 or 14 of the Form OMB 83-I?

As this is a new collection, it is a program increase of 18,000 hours to OMB's Inventory. There is no cost burden requested in Section 14. However, this ICR is expected to replace the following approved generic collections: USGS's OMB Control Number 1028-0071 (with 3,000 hours) and BLM's OMB Control Numbers 1004-0172 (500 hours), 1004-0181 (3,250 hours), and 1004-0193 (3,250 hours). Given the downward budget estimations of these existing clearances, this collection will realize a net increase of 10,000 hours.

16. Are there any plans for tabulation and publication of the results of the information collected?

These data will be collected annually and scheduled to correspond to the time period that will gain the greatest response rates for the given group.

The aggregate information will be published annually and available on the Internet as well as through publications that will best reach the respective groups.

17. Is the agency seeking approval not to display the expiration date?

No, we will display OMB's expiration date on the surveys.

18. Is the agency requesting exceptions to the certification statement in Section 19 of Form OMB 83-I?

To the extent the topics apply to this collection of information, we are not requesting exceptions to the "Certification of Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

1. What is the respondent universe and will any sampling techniques be used? What is the expected response rate?

The participating bureaus and offices propose to survey customers in the following general categories:

- Authorized public land uses (e.g., rights-of-way, land management transactions, mining, recreation, oil & gas, grazing, wildlife photographers, hunters, and fishers)
- Coal operators
- Contractors/venders
- Disabled persons and groups representing disabled persons
- Educators/researchers
- Environmental groups
- Governments representatives (State, local, and foreign)
- Grant recipients
- Indian Tribes/Alaskan Natives/Native Americans
- Industry groups (e.g., mining, oil and gas)
- Insular governments
- Interested publics/special interest groups (e.g., Friends groups for wildlife refuges)
- Law enforcement authorities, custom brokers, and brokers' associations
- Local communities
- Private and public land stakeholders (e.g., hunting, fishing, farming, banking, legal, real estate representatives, and land trust operators)
- Public information center users
- Scientific data users and technical assistance recipients
- State wildlife agencies' representatives
- Taxidermists and falconers
- Technical training recipients
- Trade organizations
- Utilities' representatives
- Visitors/Recreation
- Volunteers (past, present, prospective)
- Zoo, aquarium, and botanical garden stakeholders

In most cases, the respondent base will be pulled from a randomized sample of the user population, and where necessary, a stratified sample will be used to assure 95 percent confidence at different operating levels (ege., providing data on responding permittees at the State or region level). In some cases where the user population is small, the entire population will need to be surveyed. In all cases, the sample will be of a reasonable size and representative of the targeted population.

2/3. What are the procedures for collecting this information? What methods will be used to maximize the response rate?

In all customer research, the goal of DOI is to employ the best statistical models that, in turn, will lead to the best data from which sound management decisions can be made. Therefore, an 80 percent response rate has been set for all customer surveys, with a 70 percent response rate as base threshold.

Different user and stakeholder groups function and interact with the respective bureaus and offices in different ways. In order to meet the response rate goal, six different methodologies will be available for use. The methodology will be chosen based on achieving statistical significance while keeping the cost as low as possible. In all cases, the goal is to achieve the 95 percent confidence level with a sampling error no greater than ± 5%. The total number of respondents sought for each survey will be based on achieving this level. In most cases, the respondent base will be pulled from a randomized sample of the user population, and where necessary, a stratified sample will be used to achieve accurate statistical measures at the appropriate National, State, or regional level. In some cases where the user population is small, the entire population will need to be surveyed.

Intercept: In a face-to-face situation, the survey instrument is provided to a respondent who completes it while on site and then returns it. The survey proctor is prepared to answer any questions the respondent may have about how to fill out the instrument but does not interfere or influence how the respondents answer the questions. This methodology provides the highest response rate—typically between 80-85 percent.

Telephone: Using existing databases, an interviewer will contact customers who have had a specific experience with the agency. The interviewer will dial back until the customer has been reached. Once contacted, the survey respondent is given a brief introduction to the survey, including its importance and use. The interviewer will then expeditiously move through the survey questions. When this methodology is employed, the typical response rate is between 70 and 85 percent, depending on the customer group.

Mail: Using existing lists of customer addresses, a three contact-approach based on Dillman's "Tailored Design Method" will be employed. The first contact is a cover letter explaining that a survey is coming to them and why it is important to the agency. The second contact will be the survey instrument itself along with a postage-paid addressed envelope to return the survey. The third contact will be a reminder postcard sent 10 days after the survey was sent. Finally, the respondents will receive a letter thanking them for the willingness to participate in the survey and reminding them to return it if they have not already done so. At each juncture, the respondents will be given multiple ways to contact someone with questions regarding the survey (including phone, FAX, web, and email). If the survey has been lost, the respondent can request that another be sent to them. Electronic mail is sometimes used instead of postal mail to communicate with customers. Although this is a cost-effective mode to survey a large group of people, it does not usually generate the best response rate. Telephone calls to non-respondents can be used to increase response rates.

Web-based: For products or services that are provided through electronic means, whether e-commerce or web-based information, a web or email survey may be most appropriate. During the course of their web interaction, users can volunteer to add their name to a list of future surveys. From this list, a respondent pool will be selected in accordance with the sampling procedures outlined above. An email will be sent to them explaining the need and importance of the survey with a web link to the survey. Within 5 days, a follow-up email will be sent to the respondents reminding them to complete the survey. Finally, the respondents will receive an email thanking them for the willingness to participate in the survey and reminding them to complete it if they have not already. The respondent will always have the option to submit the survey in paper form, should they elect to do so.

Focus Groups: Some data and information are best collected through more subjective, conversational means. A focus group is an informal, small-group discussion designed to obtain in-depth qualitative information. Individuals are specifically invited to participate in the discussion, whether in person or through technologically enhanced means (e.g., video conferencing, on-line sessions). Participants are encouraged to talk with each other about their experiences, preferences, needs, observations, or perceptions. A moderator whose role is to foster interaction leads the conversation. The moderator makes sure that all participants are encouraged to contribute and that no individual dominates the conversation. Furthermore, the moderator manages the discussion to make sure it does not stray too far from the topic of interest. Focus groups are most useful in an exploratory stage or when the bureau/office wants to develop a deeper understanding of a program or service.

Using the best in focus group research practices, groups will be constructed to include a cross-section of a given customer group. The questions and additional probes used during the focus groups will be consistent with the "guideline menu."

Comment Cards: As discussed in Item A.1., agencies have been instructed to provide a means to address customer complaints. To facilitate this, comment cards may be employed. Comment cards, when provided to a customer at the time a product or service is provided, offer an excellent means to give the bureaus and offices feedback. A comment card should have a limited number of questions and an opportunity to comment. These comment cards provide managers and service providers with direct and specific information from their customers that could not be obtained through any other means.

Electronic users may be offered the opportunity to complete a comment card via a "pop-up" window (or other web-enabled means that may be available). The "pop-up" window will not appear for every user; rather, the users will be selected randomly to receive the survey. This practice is widely used in private industry. In other instances, the electronic user may be offered the option to self-select in answering the electronic comment card.

Whether using paper or electronic comment cards, the intent is to provide a feedback mechanism. The data are not intended to be statistically significant. Although questions may include numeric scales, those data should be considered only in an anecdotal fashion and not reported as a significant measure.

4. What test of procedures or methods were used?

Tests of procedures or methods are not necessarily employed. During methodology selection and instrument design, bureaus and offices and their contractors are urged to ensure that essential statistical standards are maintained. This may include testing of procedures or methods.

5. What is the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency?

This submission was prepared in consultation with Coray Gurnitz Consulting, Arlington, VA. (Contact: Roy Wright, M.P.A., and Kevin Coray, Ph.D. (703) 685-7001)

DOI's Office of Planning and Performance Management, in concert with other statistical experts in DOI, will serve as the "secondary office of control," coordinating the customer research efforts of DOI and ensuring that statistical aspects of the design remain consistent with this submission. (Contact: Office of Planning and Performance Management (202) 208-1818)